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DELHI COURT COMMUTES DEATH PENALTY IN BATLA HOUSE CASE

The Delhi High Court on Thursday reduced the death penalty of Ariz Khan, the 2008 Batla House encounter convict, to life imprisonment

NOT THE RAREST OF RARE CASE, SAYS COURT

Justices Siddharth Mridul and Amit Sharma upheld a trial court order convicting Khan for the murder of a police official and said testimonies of the eyewitnesses and other material established his presence at the place of incident as well as his firing at the raiding party while fleeing from the spot. However, the court did not find it to be a rarest of rare case

POLICE OFFICER WAS KILLED IN ENCOUNTER

- Mohan Chand Sharma, an officer of the Delhi Police's Special Cell, was killed in the encounter between the police and terrorists in south Delhi's Jamia Nagar on September 19, 2008
- Two terrorists were also killed in the encounter that took place days after five synchronised bomb explosions rocked the national capital

₹1.15 LAKH

IS THE FINE AMOUNT FOR KHAN, CUT FROM ₹11 LAKH AS HE COULD NOT PAY

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Gaza morgue overflows as Israel ties aid to hostages

Blinken promises full support to Tel Aviv in war on Palestinian militants

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE morgue at Gaza's biggest hospital overflowed Thursday as bodies came in faster than relatives could claim them following Israel's bombardment on the territory of 2.3 million people. With many Palestinians killed each day in the Israeli onslaught after an unprecedented Hamas attack, medics in the besieged enclave said they ran out of places to put remains pulled from the latest strikes or recovered from under the ruins of demolished buildings.

However, Israel said nothing would be allowed into Gaza until Hamas freed some 150 hostages taken during their deadly weekend incursion.

In Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday vowed to crush Hamas the way the Islamic State was elsewhere. "Just as ISIS was crushed, so too will Hamas be crushed. And Hamas should be treated exactly the way ISIS was treated," Prime Minister Netanyahu said at a joint press conference with visiting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Earlier, in a televised address late on Wednesday, Netanyahu said "every Hamas member is a dead man", signaling Israel's intention to completely uproot the militant group that has ruled Gaza since 2007.

Israeli strikes on Gaza continued on Thursday with its military saying more than 6,000 bombs, weighing about 4,000 tonnes have been dropped on the small Palestinian enclave since Saturday, flattening entire blocks and killing over 1,400 people there.

Blinken assured Netanyahu of full US support, saying Washington will always be on Israel's side. "No country can or would tolerate the slaughter of its citizens or simply return to the conditions that allowed it to take place. Israel has the right, indeed the obligation, to defend itself and to ensure that this never happens again," Blinken said. P12

A Palestinian woman comforts her injured children as they wait at a hospital in the city of Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip on Thursday | AFP

First batch of 230 Indians to arrive from Israel today

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE first batch of 230 Indians are expected to return home from Israel on Friday by a chartered flight, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday. Earlier in the day, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar chaired a meeting to take stock of the situation in Israel and review preparations for Operation Ajay, the scheme to bring back Indians wanting tio return home.

"We have sent an aircraft from Delhi which will fly back 230 Indian citizens to Delhi on Friday. Most of them are students. We will fly out more people as and when the situation demands and people show interest in returning to India," said MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi. A SpiceJet aircraft has been chartered for the operation, it is learnt.

Of the 18,000 Indians in Israel, around 7,000 registered with the Indian Embassy in Israel after the Hamas flare-up. One Indian woman who was injured in the attack is under treatment in a hospital there.

As for Palestine, around 15 Indians are there — 12 in West Bank and three in Gaza. They would be assisted if they reached out, the MEA said. Those in West Bank have the option of coming to Israel or moving into Jordan.

On the massacre by Hamas, Bagchi said India considers them as terrorist strikes. As for the Palestine issue, he said India always advocates resumption of direct talks towards establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable state of Palestine living side-by-side and at peace with Israel.

DISTURBING POSTS: MAN DETAINED IN HOSAPATE

Hosapete: Police detained Alam Basha, 20, an attender at the district minority office in Hosapete, on Thursday for posting some videos supporting Palestine on social media. A police officer said Basha had posted some videos supporting Palestine. He had also posted some videos related to Israel. Basha resides in a locality where a large number of people from a minority community live. A suo motu case has been registered against him. While searching his house, some disturbing religious photos and videos and those supporting Palestine were found. Such activity may lead to disturbance of peace in society. Hence, action has been initiated against Basha, the officer added. -- Kiran Balannanavar

Inflation cools to 5%, IIP at 14-month high

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

TWO sets of data released on Thursday brought cheers to the Indian economy. Consumer price index (CPI)-based inflation in September dropped to a three-month low of 5.02%, while the country's industrial production growth, measured by the index of industrial production (IIP), zoomed to a 14-month high of 10.3% in August.

The moderation in retail inflation is mainly because of a decrease in food and fuel prices, while the robust IIP numbers are attributed to good performance of manufacturing, mining and power sectors.

In the inflation index, food and fuel prices have more than 50% weightage. Vegetable prices fell 19% month-on-month in September; consumer food prices index showed a 2.18% decline in September. However, when compared with September 2022, the food inflation is still higher at 6.3% with pulses and spices registering the highest spike.

"The key risk to inflation outlook remains from food inflation due to the uneven monsoon performance and low reservoir levels," said Gaura Sengupta, economist at IDFC First Bank.

The inflation number also reflects the impact of the cut in LPG prices with fuel and light inflation at -0.1% year-on-year.

Ranen Banerjee, partner - economic advisory services, PwC India, feels the inflation may face upward pressure from lower farm outputs due to uneven rains in monsoon. High global crude prices and other geopolitical flare-ups will put further pressure on the inflation front, he added.

FINE PRINT

- Lower veg, LPG prices cooled CPI
- Inflation still above RBI's target of 4%
- Core inflation (excl food, fuel) dipped to 4.7%

Can't kill child, says SC as it weighs rights of mother vs her 26-week foetus

JAISON WILSON @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court hearing an abortion plea is facing a moral dilemma between the rights of a 26-week foetus versus the rights of the mother. "We cannot kill the child," the Supreme Court remarked while facing a conundrum over a married woman's plea to abort her 26-week pregnancy. The challenge is to balance the rights of the unborn child with the choice of the mother.

A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud was hearing the plea following a split opinion by a two-judge bench on terminating the 26-week foetus after the Centre sought a recall of the court's earlier order allowing abortion of the "unborn".

Considering the pregnancy of the woman who has entered the third trimester, the bench asked her counsel whether she wanted the court to tell the doctors at AIIMS to stop the "fetal heart" of a "living, viable foetus" under a judicial order. While stressing that the autonomy of the mother triumphs, the CJI also remarked there is none "appearing" for the child.

"How do we balance the rights of the child? Fact of the matter remains, it is not just a foetus, it is a living viable foetus. " the CJI said.

The matter will continue to be heard on Friday.

The case came up before the CJI-led bench after a two-judge bench on Wednesday gave a split verdict on the Centre's plea for recall of its October 9 order granting permission to the woman to terminate her pregnancy, which is at an advanced stage.

The court had on October 9 allowed the woman to proceed with medical termination of pregnancy.

'HONOUR KILLING'

Man murders daughter, surrenders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a suspected case of honour killing, a 47-year-old man surrendered before the police after allegedly killing his 20-year-old daughter who was in love with a man from a lower caste at Bidaluru village in Devanahalli taluk early Thursday.

The accused has been identified as Manjunath of Bidaluru village and the victim as M Kavana, his elder daughter.

The police said Manjunath, an employee of a chicken stall, took home a meat-cutting knife and allegedly slit his daughter's throat when she was asleep around 4 am. He also assaulted her with a wooden plank. Later, he went to the Vishwanathapura police station and surrendered.

Manjunath's wife was sleeping in another room when he allegedly murdered Kavana.

CONTINUED ON: P4

4 men open fire at jeweller, escape with 1 kg gold

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a daring broad daylight robbery on Thursday, four armed men shot at a jewellery shop owner in the city and escaped with one kg of gold ornaments.

The robbery happened at Vinayaka Jewellery shop on Pipeline Road at Dodda Gollarahatti off Magadi Main Road in Byadarahalli police limits. Shop owner Manoj Kumar Lohar, 30, is being treated in a private hospital and he is said to be out of danger.

Around 10.45 am, three men entered the shop in the guise of customers, while another stood guard outside. They asked Lohar to show them a finger ring. When Lohar was showing some rings, the accused pulled down the shutters of the shop from inside and started removing gold ornaments from the showcase. When Lohar tried to prevent them, they threatened him with a knife. Meanwhile, one of the accused opened fire and the bullet hit his thigh.

When the accused tried to escape on two motorcycles, an injured Lohar chased them for some distance. He caught one of the accused with the help of some passersby. However, the accused escaped after threatening the passersby with his gun.

The accused spoke Hindi. Four teams have been formed to nab them. They escaped leaving a bike near the shop, S Girish, DCP (West), told reporters.

EXPRESS READ

Bilkis case: SC seeks remission records

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Centre and the Gujarat government to submit by October 16 the original records related to the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case and murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots | P9

7 health staffers suspended for boozing at office

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

SEVEN employees of the health department, who had organised a booze party at their office on Vaccine Depot premises at Tilakwadi in Belagavi on Gandhi Jayanti day (October 2), have been suspended.

They have been identified as district health officer's car driver Manjunath Patil, Mahesh Hiremath, Satyappa Tammannavar, Anil Tippannavar, Ramesh Naik, Yallappa Munavalli and Deepak Gavade.

A video of these employees holding the booze party in their office at night went viral on social media a few days ago.

District health officer Mahesh Koni said, "It is an old video. The suspended employees are from our department."

PLAYERS' TREAT FOR AFGHAN FANS

- They cannot watch their stars in action in their country as Afghanistan play home matches away. To make up for it, the fans travel with the team wherever it plays, and support them
- In order to return the favour, the players have come up with a novel way by providing free tickets, which players, support staff and officials get from the organisers, to their fans. They did it during the 2023 Asia Cup and they are doing it at the World Cup in India | P17

Tunnel roads will be disaster for city: IISc

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

WHILE the state government is pitching for a 195-km tunnel road project as a solution to Bengaluru's traffic woes, experts from Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have submitted a report indicating that it will be a disaster for the city. The project will neither help ease congestion nor reduce air pollution in the city.

The report was submitted to the government on September 5 as part of the input for the Brand Bengaluru concept. Despite that, on October 5, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar told reporters that tenders will be invited for the "ambitious" project within 45 days.

Shivakumar had announced that the project will be implemented in stages, connecting Ballari Road, Old Madras Road, Esteem Mall Junction-Mekhri Circle, Millers Road, Chalukya Circle, Trinity Circle, Sarjapur Road, Hosur Road, Kanakapura Road-Krishna Rao Park, Mysuru Road-Sirsi Road, Magadi Road, Tumakuru Road-Yeshwantpur Junction, Outer Ring Road, Goraguntepalya, KR Puram and Silk Board.

Prof Ashish Verma, convenor, Transportation Systems Engineering Cell, Sustainable Transportation Lab, IISc, told *The New Indian Express* that the stretches the government is talking about are same as the north-south and east-west elevated corridor project proposed earlier.

He said a simulation model study of the stretches has been done and Metro, as a mode of transport, was found to be an ideal solution.

Researchers studied three models – without tunnel road construction, with tunnel road construction, and with Metro constructed instead of tunnel road — along the same proposed corridor. The models were analysed for 2020 and 2030.

CONTINUED ON: P2

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DASARA HABBA
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